

April 2015 Newsletter

CIRM April Newsletter

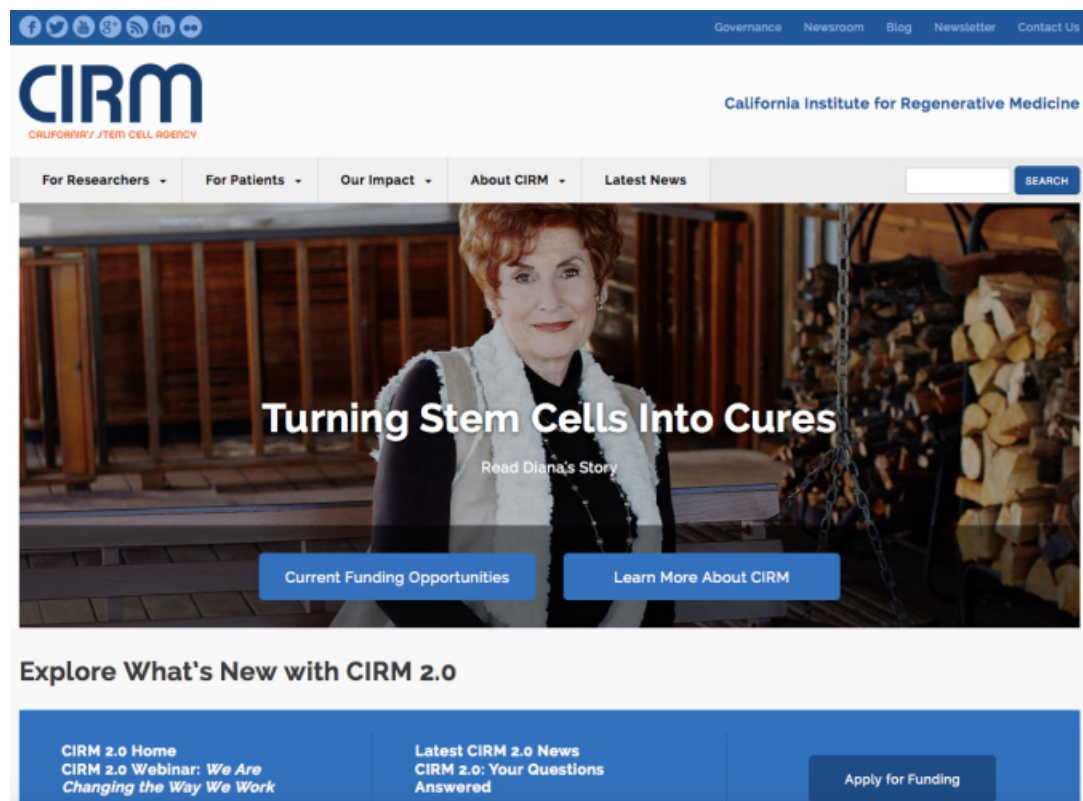
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FDA Greenlights CIRM-funded HIV Clinical Trial

On March 3rd, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the go-ahead for a clinical trial testing an innovative stem cell-based treatment for HIV/AIDS. Researchers at City of Hope working with Keck Medicine of the University of Southern California (USC) and Sangamo BioSciences plan to genetically modify a patient's own blood stem cells to resist infection with the AIDS virus. CIRM is investing \$5.6 million as part of the Strategic Partnership Award to fund the trial. Sangamo is matching that amount. CIRM is also funding another trial sponsored by Calimmune, Inc. that uses a similar approach to treat HIV/AIDS.

- [Read our press release and blog about the announcement](#)

CIRM Launches New and Improved Mobile-Friendly Website



To reflect the radical overhaul of stem cell research funding with CIRM 2.0, we launched a complete redesign of the CIRM website. In improving the site, we hope to better serve two important audiences who are critical to achieving our mission: current and potential grantees from research institutions and industry; and patients, patient advocates and the public at large. As part of the digital facelift,

the site is now more easily viewed on mobile devices. With up to 40 percent of our visitors coming to cirm.ca.gov via a smartphone or tablet, it was critical to create a superior mobile user experience.

- Visit the new and improved CIRM website
- Read our blog about the launch of the new website
- Read our blog about the site's brand new section, the Patient Advocate ToolBox

CIRM Awards \$25 Million To Develop Treatments for Disabling Disorders

At its March meeting, the CIRM governing Board awarded \$25.2 million to stem cell-based research into seven deadly or disabling disorders. The funding is part of the agency's Preclinical Development Awards program. This program supports projects that use or target stem cells, have shown potential in early stage research and are now ready to move one step closer to clinical trials in people. The successful projects target Spina Bifida, osteoarthritis, diabetic wounds, Alzheimer's disease, Huntington's disease, osteochondral defects, and Severe Combined Immunodeficiency (SCID), also known as 'bubble baby' disease.

- Read our press release for a list of the awardees

Heartfelt Award for CIRM-Funded UCLA Scientist



On March 16th, CIRM grantee Reza Ardehali of UCLA was awarded the 2015 Douglas P. Zipes Distinguished Young Scientist Award at the American College of Cardiology's 64th Annual Scientific Session and Expo. Dr. Ardehali's work focuses on trying to gain a deeper understanding of the role that stem cells play in the heart's limited ability to regenerate after an injury, such as a heart attack. He ultimately hopes to harness and enhance this ability to provide new therapies for injured hearts.

- Read our blog about Dr. Ardehali's award

The Latest Publications by CIRM-Funded Researchers

CIRM grantees are making steady progress on understanding the fundamentals of stem cell biology and moving stem cell-based therapies toward clinical trials. Here's an example of CIRM-funded research that was published in March along with press releases from the grantees' home institutions and entries from *The Stem Cellar*, CIRM's official blog:

March 2nd - *Blood*

- UCLA Release: UCLA research shows promising method for correcting genetic code to treat sickle cell disease
- CIRM Blog: One-Time, Lasting Treatment for Sickle Cell Disease May be on Horizon, According to New CIRM-Funded Study

March 9th - *Nature*

- CIRM Blog: Heart-on-a-chip used to screen drugs

March 12th - *Cell*

- Gladstone Institutes Release: Preventing Heart Cells from Turning to Bone
- CIRM Blog: Pathway discovered that could yield therapies to prevent hearts turning to "bone"

March 18th - *Nature*

- CIRM Blog: New understanding of the inner workings of our genetic tool kit should help us make smarter repairs

March 18th - *Blood*

- The Scripps Research Institute Release: TSRI Team Discovers Enzyme that Keeps Blood Stem Cells Functional to Prevent Anemia
- CIRM Blog: Goodnight, Stem Cells: How Well Rested Cells Keep Us Healthy

Upcoming CIRM Events

April 23th

The CIRM governing Board will hold its fourth meeting of 2015 by telephone. The agenda and details will be posted to the **meetings page** 10 days before the event.

Please note that the May 21st Board meeting has been relocated from San Diego to the Bay Area. The September 24th meeting will be held in San Diego. More details to follow.

CIRM 2.0 Funding Opportunities



CIRM will accept applications on a monthly basis applications for our three Clinical Stage Programs described in the Program Announcements listed below:

- PA 15-01: Partnering opportunity for late stage preclinical projects
- PA 15-02: Partnering opportunity for clinical trial stage projects
- PA 15-03: Partnering opportunity for supplemental accelerating activities

To submit an application, visit our CIRM 2.0 awards page for more information. Our Discovery and Translational Stage Programs will be announced later this year.

Sign up to receive CIRM funding announcements

CIRM Job Openings

The following positions are now open. Follow the links below to apply or go to our jobs page:

- Science Officer, Discovery Team
- Grants Management Specialist
- Director/Senior Director, Organ Systems Therapeutic Area
- Director/Senior Director, Neuro/Ocular Therapeutic Area

- Director/Senior Director, Blood and Cancer Therapeutic Area

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